

about threats on the President. We were worried about future attacks, and there's a lot of belief that Flight 93 was headed to the White House.

I was concerned about things like, is my wife safe? You know, I was worried about that. I was worried about things such as my parents. I was worried about my girls. And that's what I was concerned—I was worried about Americans who were grieving.

But at the same time, you need to know about me that I was also thinking clearly about how to respond. If America is under attack, my job as the President is to protect the homeland, to find out the facts, and to deal with it in a firm way.

I want to thank the German people and the German Government, not only for their sympathy but for understanding the new war of the 21st century. And we have a new war, and we'd better deal with it, because this is an evil group of people that are interested in destroying civilization. And so long as I'm the President, I'm going to do everything I can to prevent that from happening.

Mr. Kleber. Your people give me the signal to stop. I would love to keep going.

The President. Well, I'm sorry we can't, but maybe some other time.

Mr. Kleber. Have a safe trip.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Kleber. Take care. Bless you.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:12 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Giulio Borrelli of RAI Italian Television

May 21, 2002

Terrorist Alerts

Mr. Borrelli. Mr. President, raising the alarm about the possibility of new terrorist attack without being specific is a way of crying wolf, which can frighten people. Can Americans stop the suicide bombers?

The President. Yes, it's a very interesting question. Well, first of all, the Vice President

and the Director of the FBI was expressing a general threat—they're basically saying—with which I agree—that the Al Qaida still exists; they still hate America and any other country which loves freedom; and they want to hurt us. They're nothing but a bunch of coldblooded killers.

And if we had a specific threat to ourselves or to Italy, for that matter, we would deal with it in a way that you probably wouldn't know about. In other words, we'd be on the phone to the Italian authorities, sharing information to protect our—just so that they would help our friends protect themselves. Had we had a specific threat here in America, we would have used our assets to harden the threat. But no, it's a real problem.

The best way to secure our homeland, the best way for Italy to be secure, and other countries, is to find these killers, is to hunt for them, is to chase them down. And that's what we're going to do. And the good news is, for those of us who love freedom, and the bad news is, for the enemy, this country is very patient and very united and going to be very deliberate in our pursuit of freedom.

Europe-U.S. Relationship

Mr. Borrelli. The U.S. and Europe are divided on important issues, as the next step in the war on terrorism and steel trade. Do you think you have to change something in your leadership to be more convincing with European countries? Or do they have to modify their policy?

The President. Well, I don't think either of us have to change because we share great values. See, we love freedom. We hate those who want to kill. That's the common ground, and that's very important. And that's the high ground.

And you bring up interesting issues, you know. You bring up the issue of steel. We trade—first of all, we have trade disputes because there is so much trade. If we had no trade, there would be no disputes. And we've got \$2 trillion worth of trade, which is a significant amount of trade. Obviously, I was concerned about what imports were doing to our industry. And under the rules of the WTO, under the guidelines that we've all agreed to, I acted. I am confident and hope that our European trading partners will also

respond within the guidelines of the WTO. And that's the way you settle disputes. A trade dispute is hardly a breach of an important relationship. It is a way to work through a difficult situations.

And as far as the axis of evil, you know, I understand there are some that would hope that the threat would go away just on its own, but we're going to have to act. I will, of course, consult with our friends. I'm deliberate in my thinking. I have no set plans right now. But I am serious about making it clear to countries around the world that we need to work together to rid the world of the threat. And the threat is a nontransparent dictator—dictatorship having a weapons of mass destruction to be used countries such as yours and mine. And that's a threat that we must deal with if we want to do our duty to history.

Situation in the Middle East

Mr. Borrelli. How can America and Europe improve their efforts to make peace in the Middle East?

The President. Yes, that's a great question. We are working together well, I believe. I was very pleased with—and the Secretary of State is the one who keeps me abreast of the levels of cooperation. During the recent issues in the Middle East, the EU and our country worked very closely to try to lay out the foundations and a pathway to peace.

I gave a speech right here in the Rose Garden on April the 4th that said parties have responsibilities: Israelis have got responsibilities if they're interested in peace; the Arab world has responsibilities; as do the Palestinians. I've talked about a vision of two states living side by side, at peace, with respect to each other. The Europeans agree with that position, so we're on the same—we share the same vision. And I believe that the Europeans also agree that there will never be peace so long as terrorists continue to kill and that we've all got to use our collective efforts to stop the terrorist attacks.

We definitely agree that we've got to provide hope for the Palestinian people. There's a lot of people who've been suffering for a long period of time. We need an economic development package that will help the Palestinians realize a hopeful future. But we

cannot do so until there is the institutions of a credible state in place. In other words, we're not going to give money if it ends up going into somebody's pockets and not to help the people we're trying to help.

So we've got the framework. We've got the vision for peace and the framework for getting there, and now we've just got to continue working together to achieve it. It is a difficult subject. People have been killing each other there for a long period of time. But once there is the collective vision for peace—and I think we're building that collective vision—and once people understand their responsibilities—and we're now laying out the responsibilities—we have an opportunity to move toward that vision of peace, and that's exactly what we're doing.

Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy

Mr. Borrelli. Last time I came here I asked you if you received an invitation to have dinner with Mr. Chirac or Mr. Berlusconi, which one would you accept? You answered, you like Italian food. Do you still enjoy Italian cuisine made by Berlusconi?

The President. I love Italian cuisine. And I'm very close to the Prime Minister. He is a—he is a good man; he's easy to be around because he is a good listener and a good talker. And I like his judgment, and I like his friendship.

President's Upcoming Meeting With Pope John Paul II

Mr. Borrelli. When you go to Rome, you meet the Pope.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Borrelli. One of his desires is to visit Ground Zero in New York. Will he be visiting soon?

The President. I hope so, but that's up for the Pope to make that decision. He is a—I had the honor of visiting the Holy Father the last time I was—the visit in beautiful Rome. And actually, it was outside of Rome; we went to the summer—the summer palace overlooking the spectacular lake. And you know, he's getting older, and whether or not he's able to travel to Ground Zero will be up to—up for the Holy Father to decide. But I just want you to know I'm looking forward

to that visit. It is a great honor to be in his presence. He's a great man.

Mr. Borrelli. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 1:33 p.m. in the Map Room at the White House for later broadcast. Mr. Borrelli referred to President Jacques Chirac of France. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks Honoring NCAA Champion Teams

May 21, 2002

The President. Welcome. Please be seated. It's a beautiful day to welcome a bunch of champs to the White House. I want to welcome you all; I want to welcome the teams. Thanks for coming.

Thank you, Senators, for being here. I see Senator Dodd, Dayton. I—Senator Lieberman's on his way; I know that for a fact. I want to thank my friend Johnny Rowland, the Governor of Connecticut, here. He told me, he said, "The Connecticut women's basketball team is pretty good this year." I said, "Oh, yeah?" He said, "No, they're real good." And I said, "Well, how good?" He said, "They're going to go undefeated." I said, "Sure, Governor." Thanks for making me look bad, Johnny. [Laughter]

Senator Wellstone, thanks for coming as well, honored you're here.

I want to thank the representatives from the universities. My good friend Mark Yudof is here from the University of Minnesota. I want to thank Don Lucia as well, the head coach of the men's hockey team. I want to congratulate the Minnesota team; you won it in dramatic fashion. And you had to let down your—change your immigration laws to allow somebody from North Dakota to come in to score. [Laughter] But it was a great victory.

I want to thank Kathryn Martin and Shannon Miller from the University of Minnesota-Duluth women's hockey team for coming back again. It is a repeat performance by a great group of athletes. I want to congratulate you all for winning it two years in a row.

I want to thank and welcome Geno Aurinuma—is that right?

Mr. Auriemma. Auriemma.

The President. Auriemma. Okay, fine. [Laughter] I've never been too good in English. [Laughter] But he's a heck of a coach, however he says his name. [Laughter]

I want to congratulate the UConn women's basketball team for an unbelievable season. It—what great athletes, and they were really fun to watch.

And then, much to the delight of thousands of people around here, and many who work upstairs in the White House, the mighty Terps of Maryland are the NCAA champions. I want to congratulate Dan Mote, the president, and Gary Williams, the coach. You guys need to know that there was a lot of people that were stepping a little lighter in my family, as well as who work in this compound, when you won. It was a great feat in an unbelievably tough field. And so congratulations to you all.

You've now got a—you showed some things that I think are important for our country, particularly at this time, that if you serve something greater than yourself, called a team, you can achieve great things. If you recognize that life is more than just an individual record, that if you recognize there are—something bigger than an individual accomplishment, you can win. You can win in a broader sense. And to me, that's what these championships mean.

It's kind of what our country has got to do as well. If we serve something greater than materialism or self-absorption, we can do some great things as a country. Starting with loving our neighbor like we'd like to be loved ourselves, making sure the country is as hopeful and promising as it can possibly be.

As well as the result of being champs—I mean big-time champs—you've now got a lot of people looking at you, a lot of kids wondering, how does a champ behave? What does a champ do when they win the crown? It's a great opportunity to set an example for other people, to help people understand they're responsible for the decisions they make in life. You have that chance right now as a champ.

You've been champs on the field and on the courts and on the rinks. Now you can